United States Department of Agriculture

Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) Response
Ready Reference Guide—Introduction to
Emergency Management Response System (EMRS) 2

This document provides a brief overview of the new Emergency Management Response System 2 (EMRS2).

What is EMRS?

EMRS is an application that is used for information management in routine investigations of FADs, State-specific disease outbreaks, and other national animal health emergencies. EMRS provides a secure, accessible system for data collection, management, analysis, and reporting. EMRS has been used in more than 20 outbreaks, including the 2002-2003 exotic Newcastle disease outbreak in California. EMRS was created in 2001, on a Lotus Notes Domino platform.

What is EMRS2?

Efforts to modernize EMRS to a web-based Microsoft Dynamics CRM platform began in 2011. Just like in EMRS, in EMRS2, users will be easily able to input data and manage the tasks involved in FAD investigations, as well as other animal health events. EMRS2 is significantly more user-friendly, offers greater capabilities, and—because it is built on a Microsoft platform—easily interfaces with other Microsoft tools, such as Outlook, Excel, Word, and Sharepoint. EMRS2 can also be used in the Incident Command System. It can also be accessed through your web browser (Windows Explorer).

What does EMRS2 do?

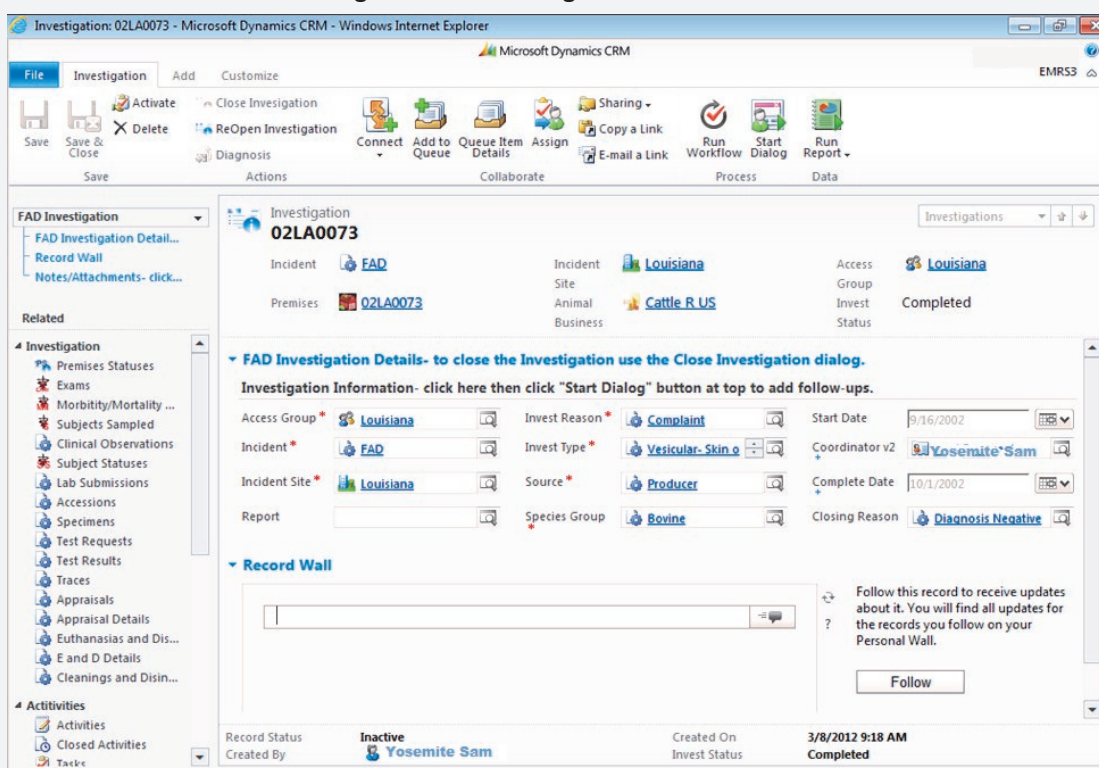EMRS2 has four key objectives:

1. Investigation (Incident) Management
2. Resource Management
3. Knowledge Management
4. Enterprise Reporting.

More specifics on the EMRS2 functionalities behind these objectives are covered later in this ready reference guide.

What is EMRS2 like?

What you see in EMRS2 will depend on your user role. Users are assigned various roles, which allows them to enter or access data quickly. Most data entry in EMRS2 is done through wizards, or custom dialogs. These dialogs have been created specifically for EMRS2 and lead you through what you need to do, based on your user role. A user's role also determines what records you are allowed to see and/or edit. For example, users may be able to enter FAD investigations, information from herd exams, laboratory submissions, and tracing details. Figure 1 illustrates how EMRS2 collects and manages information about disease investigations, including the reason for investigation, as well as the investigation's status (and closing dates).

Figure 1: FAD Investigation in EMRS2

August 2013

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Why is EMRS Important?

EMRS2 helps APHIS Veterinary Services provide timely and effective responses to animal health emergencies. It streamlines the collection, management, and analysis of data from FAD investigations and other incidents. EMRS2 facilitates animal traceability, managing information on permits, movements, tracing, animal records, and animal identification. Federal and State veterinary medical officers, animal health technicians, and various disease specialists and epidemiologists (State and Federal) will be able (based on their user role) to

♦ collect and view animal disease data,
♦ manage service activities,
♦ manage resources,
♦ create reports, and
♦ create maps of specific areas.

Objective 1: Investigation (Incident) Management

Investigation or incident management collects, collates, analyzes, interprets, and then disseminates information to those who need to know so that appropriate action (or inaction) can be taken. EMRS2 manages information related to incidents and investigations, providing actionable information which will allow rapid decisions to be made in order to protect U.S. agriculture, animal health, public health, the environment, and the economy.
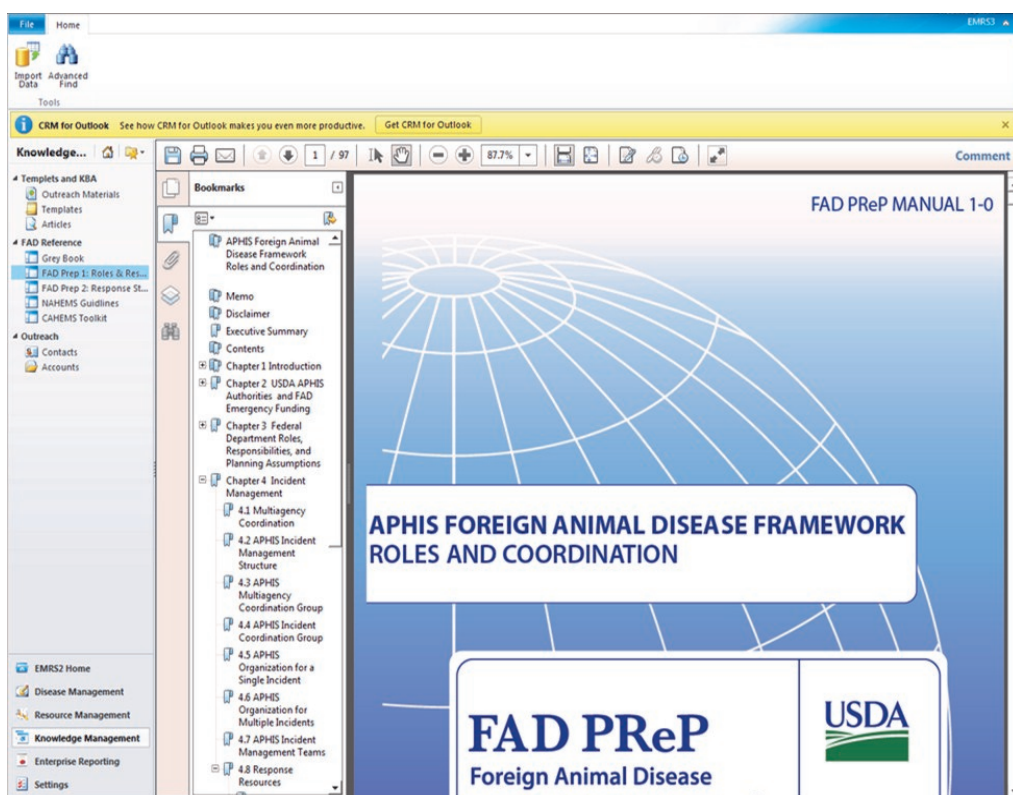
Objective 2: Resource Management

Incidents, and incident management, requires personnel. In many incidents, personnel are mobilized to handle numerous activities. EMRS2 manages personnel ordering for required incident management positions and can also schedule assignments to vehicles, equipment, and teams for specific incident management activities, such as depopulation or tracing.

Figure 2: Knowledge Management in EMRS2

Objective 3: Knowledge Management

Incident response is conducting within the National Response Framework based on the principles in the National Incident Management System. Incident Management Teams are required to prepare and produce forms and reports that are consistent with these principles. EMRS2 offers the capability to provide all users with common documents and information (see Figure 2), and also provides a reliable method to produce Incident Action Plans, Situation Reports based on the information gathered during incident management and resource management activities.

Objective 4: Enterprise Reporting

In any investigation, incident, or other animal health event, a common situational picture amongst officials and responders is critical. EMRS2 provides extensive capabilities for advanced queries and user-generated reports. It can also spatially map premises and disease information, and offer targeted reporting for local, State, regional, or national audiences. Additionally, EMRS2 provides graphs, charts, and other visualizations to report the current state of events and to project anticipated requirements for incident management and resource management. This allows decision makers, as well as Incident Management Teams, to respond appropriately.

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